

Welcome to the 2026
 FOLA Spring Plenary

www.foia.ca/plenary

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A purple rectangular slide with white text and logos. On the left side, there is a white circular logo for the Federation of Ontario Law Associations. The text on the slide includes "Federation of Ontario Law Associations" at the top, "Call to Order" in the middle, "Welcoming Remarks from the Chair Allen Wynperle" below that, and "Roll Call of the Presidents" at the bottom. At the very bottom left, there is a logo for "LDD Connect" with the text "Organization sponsor of" below it, followed by the Federation of Ontario Law Associations logo and name. On the right side of the slide, there is a photograph of a microphone on a stand, illuminated by a bright blue spotlight against a dark background.

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2025-2026 FOLA HIGHLIGHTS

SUPREME COURT

FOLA at the SCC

English Montreal School Board v. Attorney General of Quebec

ADVOCACY

2026 FOLA Lobby Day

11 MPPs, 5 Ministers, LSO, LAO, MAG

LEGAL TECH

Divorcemate Pricing & Legal Tech

POLICY

Consultations & Submissions

16+

GOVERNANCE

Rule of Law

Pledge, Zameer, Oshawa Courthouse, Premier Ford

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Attracting Lawyers to Underserved Communities



Federation of Ontario Law Associations

Welcoming Remarks

TLA Past President Anna Wong



Federation of Ontario Law Associations



Committee Chairs' Reports

- Family Law – Logan Rathbone
- Real Estate – Mark Giavedoni
- Legal Aid Committee – Terry Brandon
- Estates – Andrew Keesmaat
- Criminal – Karen Seeley



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Law Society of Ontario

LSO Update



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Break

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LiRN Update

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Lunch

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Courthouse Security

FOLA Spring Plenary

13 May 2026



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Contents

1. Overview
2. Security Investments
3. Single Point of Entry (SPOE)



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Courthouse Security Overview

Roles and Responsibilities of Police Services

- Safety and security of the judiciary, staff, justice participants, and facilities is a high priority for the ministry.
- Under the *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019* (CSPA) (formerly the *Police Services Act*), court security in Ontario is the responsibility of local police services or the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP), where applicable.
- The ministry works with municipal police services and, where applicable, the OPP, to ensure that the appropriate level of security meets the ongoing needs of individual courthouses and individual cases.
- The ministry has a limited role that includes covering capital costs to purchase and maintain security equipment as determined in consultation with the local police.

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Security Investments

- The ministry has invested over **\$250 million** in court security initiatives since 2018, with more than **2100 security projects** completed across the province.
- The ministry currently has 70 active security projects underway representing approx. \$168M.
- The ministry is focused on delivering security upgrades in communities across the province, including improved screening capacity, modernized security systems and duress alarms, and improved holding cells.
- All together, this work supports a coordinated, risk informed, and consistent approach to courthouse security across Ontario.
- With these investments, we are making improvements to security across the justice system and strengthening the safety of everyone who enters a courthouse.

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Single Point of Entry (SPOE)

- MAG is also expanding secure, single point-of-entry with full security screening to more base and satellite court locations, with **96%** of base and satellite court locations currently having SPOE.
- The ministry is working to expand SPOE to the remaining base and satellite court locations in the province.
- In 2025-26, the ministry received funding of **\$57M** over **10 years** to implement Single Point of Entry (SPOE) projects at **14 base court locations**.
- Each site will include a single, secure point of entry; a magnetometer or handheld wands; a baggage scanner; and a search table.
- Improvements will reinforce each courthouse with full security screening, an accessible front entrance, and improved walkways to streamline access and strengthen safety.

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University of Guelph



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Wiring of Funds



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A: Mandarin Ballroom (here)
B: 25th Floor, Tokyo Room
C: 25th Floor, Shanghai Room

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Associations Tune-up

Tanya Jenkins
Mary-Jo Petsche

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Mark's Real Estate Roundtable

Mark Giavedoni



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Kevin's Litigation Roundtable

Kevin Cooke



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**Greying of the Bar: Attracting and Keeping Lawyers in
Your Communities – the Southwest Region Pilot
Project**

Jennifer S. Rooke
Leanna J.T. Simpson
Bill Woodward



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Logan’s Family Law Roundtable

Logan Rathbone



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AI Crowdsourcing

Matthew Johnstone



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Treasurer's Dinner

LAWPRO Hospitality Suite



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Happy Friday!

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Federation of Ontario Law Associations

General Meeting



Materials available at FOIA.CA/PLENARY

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Break

**Check out and
Return by
11:05 AM**



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Precedent For Law By-laws and Associations Articles



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30 Tips in 30 Minutes

(ANYTHING GOES)



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LAWYERING IS HARD

DO THESE THINGS TO HELP



Have a hobby you love and dance like no one is watching



Have a good lawyer support group you can text all day !



Have a therapist on speed dial!
Have Regular Appointments!

Have a life outside law

Sources: ABA Well-Being Survey 2023, APA Mental Health in Legal Practice 2023

AG

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Preparation

- Confidence comes from preparation. Review your files/material, play “devil’s advocate”, and be ready for questions.

JR

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Time > Money
Docket everything!



Billable

If it's not docketed, it didn't happen.

Non-Billable

Where does your time go? Docketing non-billable time will tell you. Docket:

- Volunteering/Boards
- Admin
- Travel

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Protect Your Time Like You Protect Your Clients

Your Career Should Support Your Life — Not Replace It

- Block personal time in your calendar
- True emergency v artificial urgency
- Prioritize family and friends
- Your time is your most valuable professional asset – protect it!

Boss-Lady

\ˈboʊ - leɪdi\ • Noun

A woman in control, taking charge of her own circumstances in work and life. Someone who knows her worth and won't accept anything less.

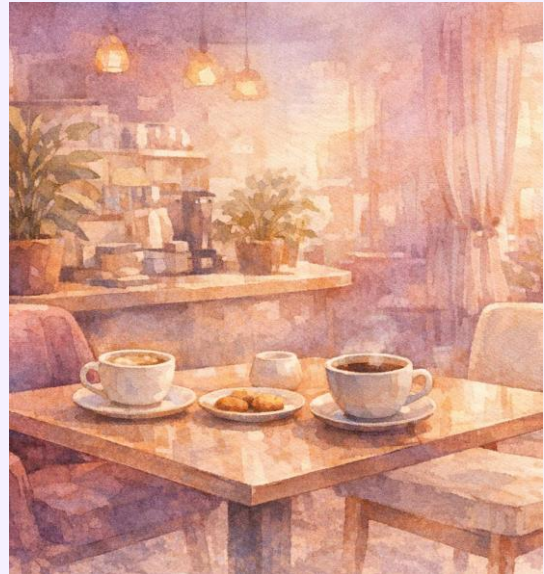
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Be the Mentor You Always Wanted

Lifting each other up makes law easier – for everyone



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Stay in Your Lane!!!!!!!!!!

Lawyers are smart, we are not doctors, therapists or accountants

Establish a Network of Professionals

Have an accountant, therapist, psychiatrist, real estate agent who you trust. For yourself and clients!

Give Advice you are qualified to give ONLY

When clients want financial, mental health or real estate advice, refer to someone who can provide this!

Know your Value

Stand your ground when another professional wants to subvert the law.

Follow up in writing!

Try to use words everyone can understand. Everyone knows you are smart, you don't need to flex!

AG

Notetaking

- Take good notes and as much as possible, take contemporaneous notes.

JR

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No one else cares about future you.
So, you should!



Unexpected events

- Cash reserve a.k.a. Rainy Day Fund
- Insurances:
 - Crit. Person, crit. Ill., disability

Retirement

- RRSP/TFSA/Pension
- Commercial Building



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Control the process

- Set clear boundaries from start
- Don't email back immediately
- No file is worth it
- Make sure you get paid
- The lawyer who controls the process usually controls the outcome



"The prosecutor says you have to roll over."

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Email Is Professional Correspondence

Write your emails as though they might one day be Exhibit A.

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Staff

ALWAYS BE TRAINING YOUR STAFF

- 01 School teaches very little about “how to practice law” or “how to run a practice”
- 02 Develop systems together.
- 03 Establish that your assistant is the boss of you.
- 04 Treat your staff how you want to be treated. We are lawyers, we are not better than anyone because of that. Do not act like that!
- 05 Treat your staff like family- you spend more time with them than your family.
Happy staff makes for a happy practice!

Being mean is unbecoming of a lawyer and is reportable!

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Litigators

- If you are a litigator, treat every moment in court like it is being recorded – because it is. Speak clearly, with purpose, and always put your client’s best interest forward.

JR

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Take less clients.



Seems wrong, but your billings (and sanity) will thank you.

- More clients does not equal more money.
- More clients DOES equal **more** stress.
- Try to focus on quality vs. quantity.
- Clients (and loved ones) will not thank you for taking on too much.

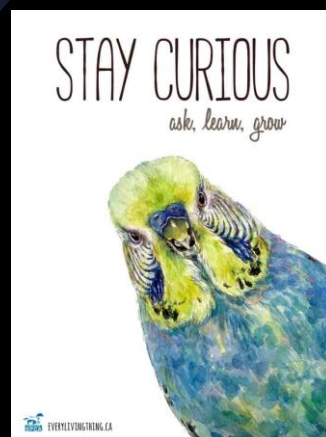
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Always stay curious

- Ask One More Questions
- Stay Current with the Law
- Learn from Everyone
- Explore Beyond Your Comfort Zone



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Get a Second Phone Line

Boundaries matter - and you don't need two phones to have them.

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BOUNDARIES THAT STICK



Client Boundaries

- Define communication hours and response windows
- Set clear appointment and cancellation policies
- Establish expectations at the initial consultation



Personal Boundaries

- Stick to set working hours even when you could flex
- Protect family time without guilt or apology
- Create a policy for friends and family legal requests



Financial Boundaries

- Clear fee agreements and payment policies upfront
- Enforce consequences for late or missed payments
- Never discount your way into resentment

"This is a job. Not a fun. Yes, I charge for my services. Answering "a few questions" is what I do, I do not sell apples". A. Gibson

AG

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Communication

- After having conversations with opposing counsel, self-represented litigants, clients, and staff etc., send confirming emails or correspondence. Use “without prejudice”, as needed.

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YEAH! IT'S ADMIN DAY!

(particularly for sole practitioners and small firms)



Defer admin tasks to a single day (mine is Friday)

- BLOCK IT OFF IN YOUR CALENDAR
- Try to defer all admin tasks to that day, if possible.
- Render accounts, pay bills, remit taxes, catch up on bookkeeping, etc.
- Other things WILL intrude, but blocking off the day makes it likely that all tasks will get done by EOD.

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Remember That Every File Is Not Your Identity

- Separate Professional Outcomes from Personal Worth
- Difficult clients and adverse rulings are part of legal practice
- Learn from setbacks without carrying them home emotionally
- Focus on professionalism, preparation, and integrity rather than perfection
- Confidence grows when you stop tying self-worth to every result



Lawyer Issues
@LawyerIssues

My friends think being a lawyer is like Suits.

Meanwhile, I just spent 3 hours fixing spacing in a motion.

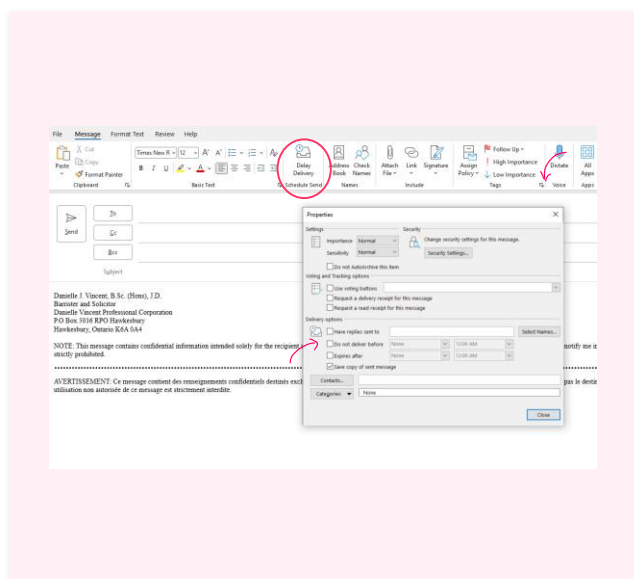
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Use Schedule Send

Your 2 AM brilliance can wait until 9 AM.



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PRACTICE MANAGEMENT

Be a Nerd, It's ok, we are all nerds!



Use Tech, even AI

Software is expensive. I tried to go without, It was a fail!



Create your own deadlines

If the court deadline for filing is five days before an event, have it done 10-12 days in advance. You'll never be late!



Track What Matters

Don't get lost in insane targets and monitoring your production. Use software that does that, and just check general!



Block Your Calendar

Block off trial prep time, motion prep, and time for yourself! Standing spa appointments are crucial.

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Written instructions

- Get written instructions especially with emotional, high stress, and/or “pinball type” clients. If there are contentious issues – get written instructions from your client

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Be Road Ready

- Cellular data connection (hotspot your phone, or dedicated cell chip in your laptop)
- Cloud Storage
- Privacy screen protector
- High watt rated (65W +) USB charger AND cable

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The AI informed client

- Listen respectfully
- Acknowledge useful issues while correcting inaccuracies
- Explain how using AI is good starting point but not a substitute for judgment
- Reinforce the value of experience, strategy, advocacy



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Work Out on Your Lunch Break

(Or something.)

Build in a reset – whatever that looks like for you



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THE DELEGATION BREAKTHROUGH

Stop Doing Everything Yourself

The 80% Rule

If someone can do a task 80% as well as you, delegate it. That's plenty good enough. Your firm scales when you accept this.

What to Delegate First

- Client intake and initial screening
- Document formatting and filing
- Calendar management and scheduling
- Billing, invoicing, and collections
- Marketing and social media

01

Audit Your Week

Track every task for 2-3 weeks. Sort into: must keep, could delegate, shouldn't exist.

02

Start Small

Hire a paralegal or VA. Delegate admin first, then expand to client-facing work.

03

Build Systems

Create SOPs for delegated tasks. Good systems make 80% quality achievable by anyone.

A partner billing \$350/hr who spends 3 hours weekly on errands sacrifices \$1,000+ in billable potential.

AG

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SAFETY

- Be aware of your own work safety – at work, at the courthouse, and in the community!

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Write thank you cards



Preferably by hand

- Good clients at end of matter
- Other professionals
- Referral sources
- Friends and family

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Define Success on Your Own Terms

- Success is more than billable hours or titles
- Consider what truly matters: flexibility, impact, income, family, health, or purpose
- Avoid constant comparison with colleagues or social media portrayals of success
- Create a career that aligns with your personal values and goals
- Long-term happiness comes from sustainability, not constant overachievement

LD

lawyer

['lɔɪər] noun

a person who is always right, writes 10,000 word document and call it as 'brief'.

someone who does precision guess work based on unreliable data provided by those of questionable knowledge.

a person who solves problems you didn't know you had in a way you don't understand.

see also: magician, wizard, trouble solver.

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**Don't Listen to Me,
or Us, or Anyone**

Take what works. Leave what doesn't.

DJV

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